

Trends

Twenty abortion facts you need to know, here are the last five:

- ☞ Every legal surgical abortion stops a beating heart and terminates measurable brain waves.
- ☞ The right to not be killed supercedes the right to privacy.
- ☞ Abortion disproportionately targets minority babies.
- ☞ Abortion is a form of gendercide shrinking the global female population at an alarming rate.
- ☞ Abortion laws greatly affect whether women chose abortion.

—Abortionfacts.com

Psalm 139:14: "I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;"

Sentence Sermons

"The right to control your body does not include the right to destroy somebody else's." —Unknown

Proverbs 6:16-17: "These six things the LORD hates, yes, seven are an abomination to Him: A proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood,"

News & Notes

Pray for the Filipino and African brethren. They are suffering due to natural and manmade disasters. Please consider donating if you're able! 1 Jn. 3:17

Pray for sister Wilma Cardwell. She's a great encouragement to all!

Please pray for Lana May. She is still recovering from her health issues.

Please pray for my son (Ryan) and his wife (Jennifer). Ryan continues to suffer.

Pray for all our members who do not attend regularly. Try to give them words of encouragement!

Pray for the all our young people. They too face many trials and temptations.

There are many needy saints, including preachers! Can you help?!

Words of Life is published by the **Westside Church of Christ** meeting at 1301 N. Enterprise, Bloomington, IN 47404

Times of Service: Bible Study, Sunday 9:30 AM and Wednesday 7:00 PM; Worship, Sunday 10:30 AM and 5:00 PM

Editor: Craig Thomas (812-320-9569); craigthomas82000@gmail.com

Please direct questions and comments to the editor.

Words of Life

Westside
church of Christ

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

John 6:68



Dec. 6,
2020

Vol. 12,
No. 39

Self-Destruction

Craig Thomas

Today's **Thought for the Day** comes from Psalm 119, the thirteenth set of eight verses, "MEM" (vv. 97-104). It never ceases to amaze me how proficient we as members of the human race are at self-destruction. We see it *ad nauseum* day after day in the daily news: murder, mayhem, vice, immorality, etc. Yet most of the self-destructive behavior is played out in the invisible, silent suffering so many experience on a daily basis.

I just finished reading Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's book "*The Gulag Archipelago*." I highly recommend it but warn you it is not an easy read. In the book Solzhenitsyn chronicles his and other's experiences in the USSR's political prison camps. He refers to this system as an *archipelago* (i.e., chain of islands) since it consisted of a vast network, or "chain," of prison camps that brutalized and murdered millions in the Soviet Union. He especially chronicles the years from the Bolshevik Revolution in 1918 to 1956. The book is not for the faint of heart as it reveals the terribly inhumane treatment meted out by the communist government against those it perceived as "enemies of the state." Untold millions were horribly mistreated, abused, tortured, and murdered by their fellow man. The brutality is almost beyond comprehension and terrifyingly disturbing. However, the ability of the human spirit to endure is awe-inspiring. I believe everyone can benefit from reading it even though the book is not for the faint of heart.

Why did this occur? Solzhenitsyn offers an amazingly simple but profound reason, he said: "Men have forgotten God; that's why all this has happened." This section of Psalm 119 offers the only antidote for human self-destruction:

⁹⁷ Oh, how I love Your law!

It is my meditation all the day.

⁹⁸ You, through Your commandments, make me wiser than my enemies;

For they are ever with me.

⁹⁹ I have more understanding than all my teachers,

For Your testimonies are my meditation.

¹⁰⁰ I understand more than the ancients,

Because I keep Your precepts.

¹⁰¹ I have restrained my feet from every evil way,

That I may keep Your word.

¹⁰² *I have not departed from Your judgments,
For You Yourself have taught me.*

¹⁰³ *How sweet are Your words to my taste,
Sweeter than honey to my mouth!*

¹⁰⁴ *Through Your precepts I get understanding;
Therefore I hate every false way."*

It is a sad commentary on the degraded state of the human condition that our source of sadness, despair, despondency, and misery all have an immutable and enduring solution: God! The solution to all our problems and difficulties that lead us down the path of self-destruction is right in front of us. It is right in front of us, staring us in the face. The only barrier to this grand elixir is our own obstinacy and self-centeredness. Let us be determined to empty ourselves of all such foolishness and dive deeply into His Word and totally immerse ourselves in its marvelous healing powers. Recall Jesus' words to the Samaritan woman at the well (Jn. 4:13-14):

"¹³ Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

Time Marches On

Joe R. Price

Until the Lord comes, Christians continue to pray, work, love and fight. The sky did not fall on Election Day. It did not fall the next day, or the day after that. Your candidate may or may not have won. You may not know yet whether your candidate has won. Your cause may have been approved at the ballot box. It may have been rejected. Whatever the outcomes, do not despair. The earth remains until the Lord comes (Gen. 8:22; 2 Pet. 3:10-12). Until then, the sun will rise tomorrow.

The gospel embeds an eternal perspective into Christians' hearts, preparing us for eternity as we walk the winding, uneven road of life (2 Cor. 4:16-18). Until the Lord comes, Christians continue to pray. About everything (Phil. 4:6). Without ceasing (1 Thess. 5:17). Without being discouraged (Lk. 18:1). For all people, including those with authority over our lives (1 Tim. 2:1-2).

Until the Lord comes, Christians continue to work. Always abounding (1 Cor. 15:58). Because it is day and the night is coming (Jno. 9:4). Because there is a harvest, and laborers are few (Matt. 9:37-38).

Until the Lord comes, Christians continue to love. Each other (Jno. 13:34-35). Our neighbors (Rom. 13:8-10). Our enemies (Matt. 5:44). Above all, God and His word (Matt. 22:37; Psal. 119:97).

Until the Lord comes, Christians continue to fight. The good fight of faith (1 Tim. 6:12; 1:18). With purpose and discipline of faith (1 Cor. 9:26-27). Against the wiles of the devil (Eph. 6:11). For truth against "arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God" (2 Cor. 10:3-5; Jude 3-4).

Life goes on. "And those who know Your name will put their trust in You; for You, LORD, have not forsaken those who seek You" (Psa. 9:10).

Fighting Without, Fears Within

Larry Hafley

Paul faced the internal trouble and infernal trauma of fightings without and fears within (2 Cor. 7:5). We all have. We all do. We all will. Therefore, the next time you are tempted to feel as though you are the "only one" who suffers in this way, remember, you are not alone. Though it will not help solve your problems, others suffer, too.

Consider Lot. His soul was grieved by the ungodliness that enveloped him (2 Pet. 2:8). Consider Joseph. Oh, what tortures of mind and torments of heart did that young man endure. Injustice, indeed! Not until we consider Job do we see such agony and undeserved suffering (Gen. 39, 40). Whatever your pain, your curse, does it exceed that of those beloved brethren? Then, consider Jesus (Heb. 12:2; 1 Pet. 2:22-24; 4:1).

This is not to deny nor diminish your ills. They are real. Whether self-inflicted or not, they hurt; they frighten; they intimidate; they make you hesitant, indecisive, ashamed. They are 21st century demons that often defy exorcism. We know. We care. We want to bear and to share your burdens, but we cannot do so, at least, not fully, not completely.

"¹⁶ Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, ¹⁸ while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

—2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Know this, though, the Lord knows, he cares, and he can bear and share your weight of woe. Remember the old song, "Does Jesus Care?" "O, yes, He cares, I know he cares. His heart is touch with my grief; When the days are weary, The long nights dreary, I know my Savior cares." What we must do, then, is to cast all our care upon him, "for he careth for you" (1 Pet. 5:7).

This is perhaps our greatest failing. We fail to cast our fears upon him. He will not lift them without our consent. He stands at the door and knocks, but he does not open (Rev. 3:20). That is our duty. He has knocked oft before, but a lack of faith and self pity may have dulled our ears to his approach and appeal. Let us cast off the doubts that threaten to drown us in mental misery and simply open the door. He stands there, and, "if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." That is the divine promise.

Yes, there are fightings without, but there is also a faithful Father without—"I stand at the door and knock." Yes, there are fears within, but there is also a loving, living Lord within those who keep his word (Jn. 14:21-23). The question is not, "Hast thou fightings and fears?" The question is, "Hast thou faith?" Without that faith, the fightings rage, the fears increase. With that faith, the door is opened, the world is overcome, and the music of faith vanquishes our foes and soothes our fears (1 Jn. 5:4, 5).